

CHARLESTON

FIRE DEPARTMENT



Close Call For Resident On Camp Road

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Charleston, SC (January 14, 2015): The Charleston and James Island Fire Departments, Charleston Police Department, and Charleston County EMS were dispatched on 1/13/2015 to a reported residential structure fire on Camp Road. The first unit arrived in less than 5 minutes and reported visible smoke coming from the home. Fire personnel rapidly searched the house and encountered heavy smoke but no active fire. Crews discovered a smoldering fire in a family room, completed extinguishment of the fire, and ventilated the home.

The occupant of the home reportedly awoke to find the home full of smoke and the smoke alarm sounding. She quickly exited the home and called 911. Members of the Fire Marshal Division were called to investigate the fire and determined the fire cause was related to a portable heater in the family room that was powered by an electrical extension cord. The fire burned in the home for an undetermined amount of time until the oxygen in the area was depleted and the fire nearly self-extinguished. The occupant slept through the smoke alarm and encountered the residual smoke in the morning. She remained unharmed during the fire event because her bedroom door was in the closed position.

“This fire could have resulted in a fire fatality,” said Deputy Fire Marshal Rick Anewalt. “The occupant of the home survived the fire event due to a closed bedroom door. This event reinforces the benefits of closing bedroom doors to improve or increase escape time and survivability of fire events.”

The Charleston Fire Department would like to remind citizens of the following:

- Install and maintain smoke alarms in your home. Every level of your home should have at least one smoke alarm. Installing smoke alarms within each sleeping area and interconnecting alarms improves notification.
- Verify smoke alarms can be heard throughout the home.
- Maintain at least 3' of space between portable heaters and combustible materials.
- Turn off portable heaters when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Only utilize portable heaters that have been labeled by a recognized testing laboratory and include automatic shut-off (tip over) and thermostat control.
- Plug space heaters directly into wall outlets and never into an extension cord or power strip.
- If there is a fire, get out and stay out. Call the fire department as soon as you are safely outside.

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